In the claims:

1. A method for dynamically determining the health of a service resident on a host machine, comprising:

collecting service performance information from the service; and

translating the collected service performance information into a generic output.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the host machine comprises one or more components, further comprising:

collecting external performance information from one or more of the one or more components;

translating the collected external performance information; and

combining the translated external performance information and the translated service information to provide the generic output.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein the generic output comprises one of a scriptable interface and an application programming interface.

4. The method of claim 1, further comprising accessing the generic output to read the health of the service.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein the collecting step comprises reading performance information provided by the service.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein the collecting step comprises deriving performance information from the service.

7. The method of claim 6, wherein the deriving step comprises using a wrapper program to read the performance information.

8. The method of claim 6, wherein the deriving step comprises using a probe program to read the performance information.

9. The method of claim 1, wherein the collected service information relates to a plurality of performance metrics, wherein the generic output comprises a plurality of service health metrics, and wherein the translating step comprises combining one or more

of the plurality of performance metrics to provide one or more of the plurality of service health metrics.

10. The method of claim 9, wherein the plurality of service health metrics comprises availability, capacity, throughput, service time, queue length, utilization, service level violations, and user satisfaction.

11. An apparatus that determines a health of a service resident on a host machine, comprising:

a data collection engine that collects service health information; and

a translation engine that translates the collected service health information using a health generation algorithm and provides one or more generic health metrics.

12. The apparatus of claim 11, wherein the host machine comprises one or more external components, wherein the data collection engine collects external performance information from one or more of the one or more external information, and wherein the translation engine translates the collected external information using the health generation algorithm to provide the one or more generic health metrics.

13. The apparatus of claim 12, wherein the apparatus further comprises a generic output comprising the generic health metrics, wherein the generic output is one of an API and a scriptable interface.

14. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the data collection engine, comprises:

a data query module that reads performance information from the service; and

a data derivation module that derives performance information from the service.

15. The apparatus of claim 14, wherein the data derivation module derives the performance information from one or more of a wrapper program, a benchmark program and a probe program.

16. The apparatus of claim 11, wherein the health generation algorithm comprises:

a weighting scheme that weights one or more performance information parameters;

a summation scheme that combines one or more performance information parameters; and

a averaging scheme that averages collected service health information for a service health metric.

17. The apparatus of claim 11, further comprising an interval control engine that receives the service health information at a first time interval and provides an output having a second time interval different from the first time interval.

18. A method for monitoring health data of a service operating on a host machine, comprising:

collecting service performance information from the service;

collecting external performance information from components of the host machine;

translating the collected service and external performance information according to a health generation algorithm to generate a generic service health output; and

providing the generic service health output as an output file accessible by performance monitoring tools.

19. The method of claim 18, wherein the step of collecting the service performance information comprises reading first service performance parameters and deriving second service performance parameters, and wherein the step of collecting the external performance information comprises reading first external performance parameters and deriving second external performance parameters.

20. The method of claim 18, further comprising collecting the service performance information on a first interval and adjusting the first interval to provide the generic service health output at a second interval.

21. An apparatus that determines a health of a service, wherein the service operates on a host computer, comprising:

a collection module that receives performance information related to the service;

a translation module that applies a rule set to the received performance information and derives generic health metrics therefrom; and

an output module that outputs the generic health metrics.

22. The apparatus of claim 21, wherein the collection module receives external performance information from one or more external services coupled to the host computer and receives internal performance information related to operation of the service on the host computer.